

**Amendments to the Specification:**

*On page 1, line 12, replace the entire paragraph with the following replacement paragraph:*

Moreover [A. S. Holmes et al., "Applied Optics", 1/9/1993, vol.32, n.25, ~~page 4916-4912 pages~~  
~~4916-4921~~], silica films find applications as antireflexion and as planar wave-guides, or even as host material for active dopants for nonlinear optic as well as optical sensing applications.

*On page 3, line 24, replace the entire paragraph with the following replacement paragraph:*

- Italian patent application n. NO 98 A [[00004]]000004 describes a sol-gel process for the preparation of thick films of silicon-dioxide that improves the well-known procedure by the addition of a certain quantity of fumed silica to the hydrolysis product of silicon alkoxide.